

Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1 1. (Currently amended): A method of collecting an electronic signature for an
2 electronic record stored in a database, the method comprising:
3 automatically creating an electronic record from data stored in a plurality of
4 different database tables associated with a database transaction in response to an occurrence of a
5 predetermined event;
6 storing an instance of the electronic record in a common repository of electronic
7 records that provides an audit trail that cannot be altered or disabled by users associated with the
8 database;
9 executing a rule associated with the electronic record to determine whether an
10 electronic signature is required to connote review and/or approval of the electronic record; and
11 if execution of the rule results in a determination that an electronic signature is
12 required, marking the instance of the electronic record as unsigned and initiating a request to
13 collect the required electronic signature prior to committing the database transaction to the
14 database.

1 2. (original): The method of claim 1 further comprising receiving an electronic
2 signature from the user; verifying the electronic signature; and in response to a positive
3 verification of the electronic signature, marking the electronic record as signed.

1 3. (original): The method of claim 2 wherein the electronic record is stored in a
2 common repository of electronic records that provides an audit trail that cannot be altered or
3 disabled by users of the database.

1 4. (original): The method of claim 1 wherein the electronic record comprises
2 unstructured data in a character large object (CLOB) format.

1 5. (original): The method of claim 3 wherein the unstructured data comprises a
2 well formed XML document stored within a column of a table stored in the database.

1 6. (original): The method of claim 4 wherein fields of the electronic record are
2 filled with XML data based on a predefined mapping to multiple data sources.

1 7. (original): The method of claim 1 further comprising the step of, if execution
2 of the rule results in a determination that an electronic signature is required, displaying data from
3 the electronic record on a computer display.

1 8. (original): The method of claim 7 wherein data from the electronic record is
2 display according to a predefined layout set forth in an XSL style sheet.

1 9. (original): The method of claim 1 wherein the rule requires a plurality of
2 different electronic signatures and wherein, if execution of the rule results in a determination that
3 a plurality of electronic signatures are required, requesting the plurality of electronic signatures.

1 10. (original): The method of claim 1 wherein the electronic record is initially
2 marked as unsigned by setting an appropriate attribute associated with a database table in which
3 at least part of the record is stored.

1 11. (Currently amended): A computer system that manages electronic records
2 stored in a database, the computer system comprising:

3 a processor;

4 a database; and

5 a computer-readable memory coupled to the processor, the computer readable
6 memory configured to store a computer program;

7 wherein the processor is operative with the computer program to:

8 (i) automatically create an electronic record from data stored in a plurality of
9 different database tables associated with a database transaction in response to an occurrence of a
10 predetermined event;

11 (ii) store an instance of the electronic record in a common repository of electronic
12 records that provides an audit trail that cannot be altered or disabled by users associated with the
13 database;

14 (iii) execute a rule associated with the electronic record to determine whether an
15 electronic signature is required to connote review and/or approval of the electronic record; and

16 (iv) mark the instance of the electronic record as unsigned and initiate a request
17 to collect the required electronic signature if execution of the rule results in a determination that
18 an electronic signature is required prior to committing the database transaction to the database.

1 12. (original): The computer system of claim 11 wherein the electronic record is
2 stored in a common repository of electronic records that provides an audit trail that cannot be
3 altered or disabled by users of the system.

1 13. (original): The computer system of claim 12 wherein the electronic record
2 comprises unstructured data in a character large object (CLOB) format.

1 14. (original): The computer system of claim 13 wherein the unstructured data
2 comprises a well formed XML document stored within a column of a table stored in the
3 database.

1 15. (original): The computer system of claim 14 wherein fields of the electronic
2 record are filled with XML data based on a predefined mapping to multiple data sources.

1 16. (original): The computer system of claim 11 wherein the processor and
2 computer program are further operative to obtain and verify the electronic signature, and
3 thereafter, mark the electronic record as signed.

1 17. (Previously presented): The computer system of claim 16 wherein the
2 processor and computer program are further operative to initially mark the electronic record as
3 unsigned by setting an appropriate attribute associated with a database table in which at least part
4 of the record is stored.

1 18. (Currently amended): A computer program product having a computer-
2 readable storage medium storing a set of code modules which when executed by a processor of a
3 computer system cause the processor to manage electronic records stored in a database, the
4 computer program product comprising:

5 code for automatically creating an electronic record from data stored in a plurality
6 of different database tables associated with a database transaction in response to an occurrence of
7 a predetermined event;

8 code for storing an instance of the electronic record in a common repository of
9 electronic records that provides an audit trail that cannot be altered or disabled by users
10 associated with the database;

11 code for executing a rule associated with the electronic record to determine
12 whether an electronic signature is required to connote review and/or approval of the electronic
13 record; and

14 code for marking the instance of the electronic record as unsigned and initiating a
15 request to collect the required electronic signature if execution of the rule results in a
16 determination that an electronic signature is required prior to committing the database transaction
17 to the database.

1 19. (Previously presented): The computer program product of claim 18 wherein
2 the electronic record is stored in a common repository of electronic records that provides an audit
3 trail that cannot be altered or disabled by users of the system.

1 20. (Previously presented): The computer program product of claim 19 wherein
2 the electronic record comprises unstructured data in a character large object (CLOB) format.

1 21. (Previously presented): The computer program product of claim 20 wherein
2 the unstructured data comprises a well-formed XML document stored within a column of a table
3 stored in the database.

1 22. (Previously presented): The computer program product of claim 21 wherein
2 fields of the electronic record are filled with XML data based on a predefined mapping to
3 multiple data sources.

1 23. (Previously presented): The computer program product of claim 18 further
2 comprising code for obtaining and verifying the electronic signature, and thereafter, marking the
3 electronic record as signed.

1 24. (Previously presented): The computer program product of program 23
2 further comprising code for initially marking the electronic record as unsigned by setting an
3 appropriate attribute associated with a database table in which at least part of the record is stored.

1 25. (Currently amended): A method of collecting an electronic signature for an
2 electronic record stored in a database, the method comprising:
3 automatically creating an electronic record in response to an occurrence of a
4 predetermined event from data stored in a plurality of different database tables associated with a
5 database transaction, wherein the electronic record comprises unstructured, well-formed XML
6 data stored in a character large-object (CLOB) format;
7 storing an instance of the electronic record in a common repository of electronic
8 records that provides an audit trail that cannot be altered or disabled by users associated with the
9 database;
10 executing a rule associated with the electronic record to determine whether an
11 electronic signature is required to connote review and/or approval of the electronic record; and
12 if execution of the rule results in a determination that an electronic signature is
13 required, marking the instance of the electronic record as unsigned;
14 requesting the electronic signature;
15 after obtaining the electronic signature, verifying its authenticity; and
16 if the electronic signature is verified as authentic, marking the electronic record as
17 signed prior to committing the database transaction to the database.